



June 8, 2016

Dear Governor Dannel P. Malloy:

Safe Kids Connecticut would like to thank you for your outstanding leadership on behalf of children and families in our state. Safe Kids strongly supports Public Act 16-126, a bill before you that would allow for the child endangerment prosecution of drivers who operate a car with kids as passengers while under the influence of alcohol.

Operating a motor vehicle while under the influence is responsible for almost 20% of annual traffic deaths involving children ages 0-14. These tragedies have a human face. Earlier this year, a mother in Glastonbury drove into a utility pole and wall after ignoring a stop sign. According to the police report, she drank alcohol with her prescription medications right before getting behind the wheel with seven passengers, three of whom were between the ages of 7 and 15. These kids were not buckled up in either car seats or safety belts. The mother was charged with several offenses but child endangerment was not available to law enforcement. Fortunately no one was killed in this Glastonbury crash.

According to research conducted by MADD, in deadly crashes involving drunk drivers, the driver had restrained their child in a car seat only 18% of the time. This is one more critical way in which kids are endangered when the person driving the car is impaired by alcohol consumption. Children do not have the choice to opt out of riding with a drunk driver or appoint a designated driver.

This bill, if signed, will lead to safer roads for all drivers and passengers. We appreciate your continued work for the wellbeing of the children of Connecticut urge you to sign this bill into law.

Sincerely,

Luis Rivera, Director

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